National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

HFC *on* MEDIA

March | 2005 Issue 5

Rep. Harley Staggers (West Virginia), Sen. Jennings Randolph (West Virginia), Bill Everhart (first HFC Manager), Secretary of the Interior Stewart Udall, and Sen. Robert Byrd (West Virginia) presented a model of the planned building for the new Harpers Ferry Center to the media on September 21, 1967. The large structure in the background of the model is the Mather Training Center whose establishment preceded HFC by six years.

From the Manager

On March 2, 1970, Harpers Ferry Center opened for business. In 1970, more than 172 million people visited 278 units within a National Park System of 29,517,746.91 acres. The U.S. population stood at 203 million. A GS-9 earned $9,230. A brand new Volkswagen bug cost $2,002. Secretaries—that is what we called them in those days—used Selectric typewriters. The rest of us made do with manual typewriters and used Whiteout to correct our mistakes. Computers could be found in the Department of Defense, the Census Bureau, and large universities. Rooms full of spinning magnetic tape readers did not have the capacity of a single 2005 desktop computer. Obviously much has changed in the 35 years that the Center has existed; some changes were big, others just crept up on us. The commitment to doing quality work, helping the parks, and serving the American people—the reasons the Center was created—remain as strong today as those ideas were in 1970. Though technology has opened doors we did not even know existed, Center staff and our colleagues in the parks continue to strive for the most effective means to tell the stories, to engage the attention, and to stimulate the thinking of our fellow citizens and people from around the world. We look forward to many more years of doing the same kind of work.

— Gary Cummins

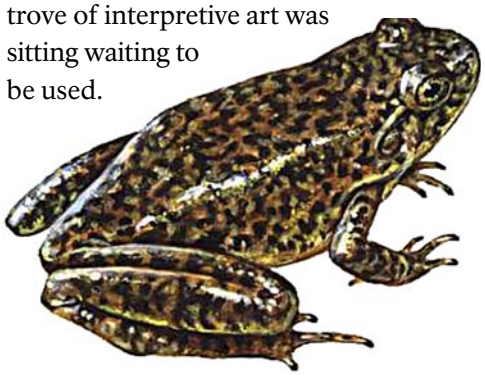
In This Issue

Commissioned Artwork

A Veritable Treasure

What has cost the National Park Service millions of dollars, has taken more than 35 years to acquire, is a wealth of interpretive tools, and is free for you to use? It is the thousands of images—the NPS commissioned art collection—created by some of this nation's outstanding artists for use in exhibits, movies, publications, and waysides.

When Harpers Ferry Center was established in 1970, the Center immediately began creating media products for parks. Slowly at first, but soon with increasing frequency artists were hired to do what photographs and words could not—show how a cliff dwelling looked in 1300 rather than its state in 1970; compress millions of years of geologic change into a process that we could understand visually; and recreate a historic event that took place before the camera appeared on the scene. In the mid-1990s HFC management realized that the technology was now available to make this rich collection available to as many people as possible. Prior to this, pieces of art were stored in the individual media divisions. Knowledge of each inventory was only as good as a few persons' memories. For someone in a park trying to find a piece of art or even to know that something might exist was daunting. Where did you start? Would you be fortunate enough to find someone who knew someone else who might know? All the while the treasure trove of interpretive art was sitting waiting to be used.



The collection is simply phenomenal. Currently it holds more than 11,000 separate works of art. The artists represent a veritable pantheon of 20th century American illustration and art: Leonard Baskin, Alan Cober, Louis Glanzman, Ben Shawn, and Saul Steinberg to name just a few. The collection contains a dozen pencil sketches by Olaus Murie of wolves at Denali National Park, produced in the 1940s when he and his brother, Adolph, conducted field research that resulted in new wildlife management practices.

The idea was to take this valuable collection and create a searchable database that would include every single item of

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Send questions and comments to Gary Candelaria either by email at *gary_candelaria@nps.gov* or call 304 535 6058. To contact the editorial staff email Bob Grogg at *bob_grogg@nps.gov* or call 304 535 6415.

Secretary of the Interior
Gale A. Norton

Director,
National Park Service
Fran P. Mainella

Associate Director,
Park Planning, Facilities,
and Lands
Sue Masica

Manager,
Harpers Ferry Center
Gary Cummins

Editor
Bob Grogg

Art Direction
Robert Clark,
Office of NPS Identity

Contributors, March 2005
Tom DuRant
Eric Epstein
David Gilbert
Phil Musselwhite
Wade Myers
Zach Norman
Mike Watson

The National Park Service cares for special places saved by the American people so that all may experience our heritage.

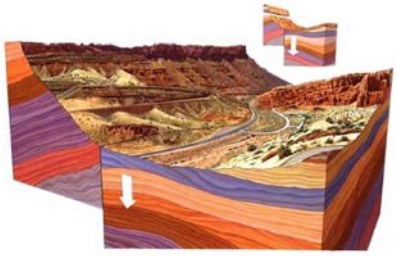
EXPERIENCE YOUR AMERICA™

art that the National Park Service has bought over the years. Currently, 10,435 records appear online; this number changes as more illustrations are added to the collection. The database includes information on the artist, a description of the illustration, when and why the piece was created, any restrictions on use, and a low resolution image so that a searcher can get a very clear idea of what the art looks like. The collection is searchable by artist, by park, by media type, and keyword. For instance, imagine you have been given the assignment to do a temporary exhibit for African American History Month. The commissioned art collection has a category under its themes tab called 'Black History.'

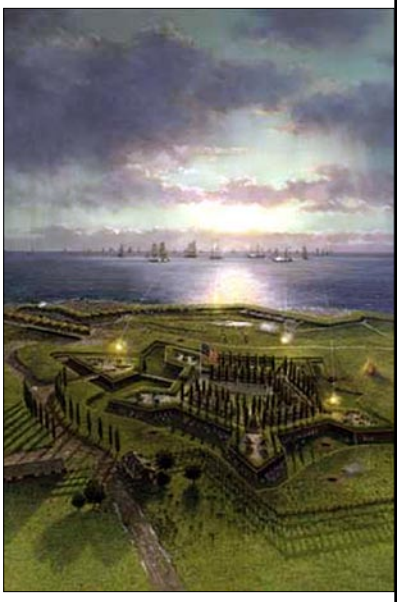
But this is getting ahead of the story. Most of the images in this collection are owned outright by the National Park Service and are therefore in the public domain. A significant number, however, are restricted in how and who can use the image. Please read carefully the use information that accompanies each item. Contact Wade Myers who manages and maintains the collection either through the website or by email: wade_myers@nps.gov.

Knowing if and how the image can be used leads naturally to the next step: Getting an image that can become part of your project. The images that are online are low resolution. These images are appropriate for use in a site bulletin or in some layouts for PowerPoint presentations, but little else. You will need a high resolution image for other uses. Again, you need to contact Wade Myers to make these arrangements. The files are so large that the high resolution images will be transferred to a CD and mailed along with a letter specifying any restrictions or other use considerations.

Familiarize yourself with the collection. Go to the website and browse through it (*www.hfc.nps.gov/hfc-insite/cfml/art-default.cfm*). You may be surprised at what you find. You will see everything from submarines to elephants. These images also can play a role as reference art, when you need something similar but different from what the collection already holds. You can see how one artist approached a certain subject, and what the result was. Make this treasure work for you.



The selection of illustrations on this and the preceding page gives an indication of the tremendous variety that can be found by browsing through the collection. On page 2 are Charley Harper, Canyon Country; and John Dawson, a Mountain Yellow-legged frog.



On this page from top to bottom are: Lynn Gallagher, the Philadelphia Merchant Exchange; Richard Schlecht, Frederick Douglass; Michael Hampshire, the Moab Fault; Ken Townsend, Fort McHenry; and Don Troiani, dismounted Light Dragoon. The Government owns these particular illustrations and all reproduction rights. Townsend used the words of the "Star-Spangled Banner" as his guide in choosing the moment to depict in the Fort McHenry illustration. Here "by the dawn's early light," we see the "bombs bursting in air." This is the glory of commissioned art: it can re-create a scene that no one ever recorded previously and bring emphasis to a particular moment.

The Care and Feeding of Audiovisual Equipment

Keeping it up and Running

Parks use a great deal of audiovisual equipment to tell their stories, to orient visitors, and to provide safe and enjoyable visits. Most systems can be broadly categorized as audio stations, exhibit videos, or video projection systems. Variations include interactive exhibits, lighted maps with audio, and a few elaborate sound and light shows. Newer programs run from optical discs (compact discs, laserdiscs, or DVDs) or solid state media such as Compact Flash cards. From past eras about 50 35mm slide shows and a dozen 16mm films are still in use.

The good news is that today's audiovisual equipment generally is well made and low maintenance, can stand some abuse, and should last a long time. The brutal truth is that eventually everything breaks, but parks can do a lot to increase equipment life. Heat is the most damaging enemy along with electricity supply fluctuations brought on by storms, excessive local demand, or lightning strikes. Both can be protected against to some extent. Each installation has its own requirements. Here are some tips that come from years of installing and servicing equipment. You will find some of this advice goes against traditional wisdom of how to use audiovisual equipment. For instance, turning a piece of equipment off when you are not using it is the way most of us have been taught. That treatment can harm some of today's equipment. So read these tips carefully and apply them where appropriate.

- Even though a theater or auditorium is air-conditioned, the projection booth may not be. A projector running continuously 8 to 10 hours a day can build up a lot of heat. Place a thermometer about two feet from the projector's air intake. Monitor the temperature every hour and record it. If the temperature is above 85° F, you are likely shortening the projector's life span. Bringing in a fan to circulate hot air is usually not a good solution. You will need to find some way to bring in cooler air or air-condition the booth.

- Lamps for older 16mm film and 35mm slide projectors can be turned off in between shows as they are relatively inexpensive. However, video projectors are different. Turning a video projector off between shows can damage the projector itself, and it will significantly shorten the life of the lamp. These lamps cost between $350 and $2,200 depending on the type and brightness. They are designed to be turned on and then maintain a constant temperature. Each cooldown and relighting of the lamp takes many hours off its lifespan.

- For video projectors, write down the date of each lamp change; keep track of the number of operating hours. Newer projectors have a lamp change indicator. Change the lamp as soon as the rated hours have been used or the indicator

The number of cables going into a piece of equipment (below) underscores the need to ensure that every connection is tight.

comes on. Failure to do so can cause the lamp to explode and either destroy the projector or result in a costly repair. Follow the instructions in the owner's manual carefully.

- Dirty air filters on video projectors will cause overheating and shorten the lifespan of the projector and lamps. Since airborne dirt and dust varies depending upon location and seasonal variations, check the filters once a week at first and once a month thereafter. Each projector can have as many as four filters. Some projectors have protection circuits that will turn off power if the temperature gets too high. Again, follow maintenance instructions in the owner's manual.

- Optical disc and other media players do not have filters, but they do need air circulation either with built-in fans or through convection. Be sure to keep the vents clean. Free air flow is required to prevent overheating. While no longer being manufactured, there are still many laserdisc players in the field. With current budget realities, many parks may need to leave these units in service.

- Fluctuating power supply plays havoc with electronic equipment. Urban areas are as prone to this problem as rural areas are. Ideally, protect the equipment with an Uninterrupted Power Source (UPS), also known as a battery back up. For computer-based playbacks, a UPS is essential. They are, however, expensive to buy, require costly periodic battery replacement, and sometimes do not fit into an exhibit design where the power is controlled remotely. A surge protector is a must. They are reasonably priced and generally are built into power strips.

- Experience has taught us that if a system is not working the trouble is just as likely to be a connection or wiring as it is to be the equipment. First make sure that all connections are tight. Check to see that during cleaning a vacuum brush did not knock against a button and change a setting. Sometimes rodents chew through electrical lines, so check any exposed wires.

- Video monitors right out of the box have been set at the factory for very high contrast. These settings, however, can reduce the life span of standard Cathode Ray Tube (CRT) monitors. Reducing the contrast a bit so that it is not overly bright can significantly increase the life of the tube.

- Plasma screens are susceptible to "burn-in"—the ghost of an image that remains even though it is not on screen. This can happen if a static image is on screen for as little as one hour, thereby ruining a $5,000 to $10,000 screen. HFC-produced programs are designed so this will not happen. If you are working with your own contractor make sure that the program has no static images. Likewise do not show only the park name or the arrowhead when a program is not running. This applies to plasma screens only; liquid crystal display (LCD) screens do not suffer this handicap.

- Solid state audio stations require no maintenance and are generally trouble-free for years, although some models have a higher failure rate than others. Periodically check to make sure that they are running properly and that the content of the message is consistent with current interpretation and safety goals.

In summary, request that your installer spend some time with you to go over basic maintenance issues, be familiar with your owner's manual, and know that help is available from Harpers Ferry Center. Call 304-535-5050, and you will be directed to someone who can help.

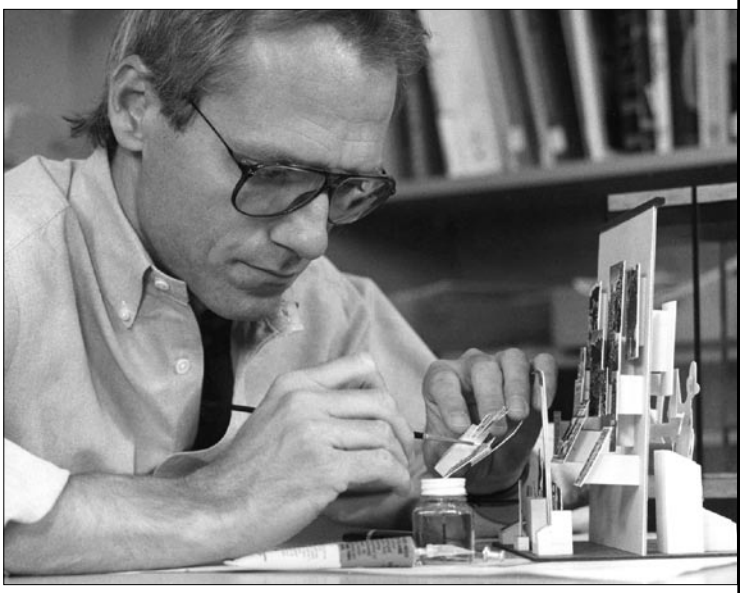
Projectors come in a variety of guises: slides (top), video (two in the middle), and 16mm (below).

Harpers Ferry Center

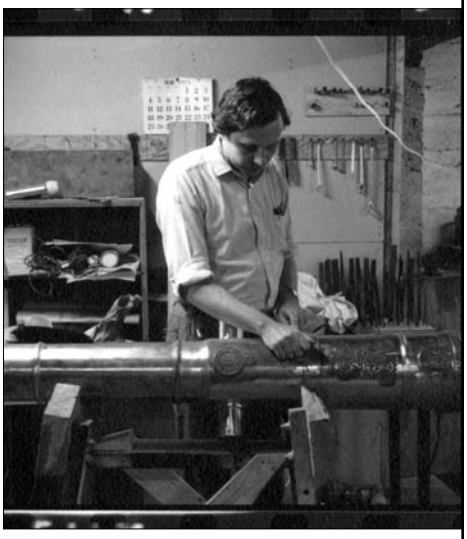
A Photographic Retrospective

On April 4, 1964, Vincent Gleason, Chief, Publications Branch, submitted a suggestion to the Incentive Awards Committee "that the National Park Service locate the creative functions of its Washington Interpretive Staff in a shop, built exclusively for that purpose, at Harpers Ferry, West Virginia." The proposal was accepted, and Gleason received $400 for his suggestion. The building was designed by Ulrich Franzen Associates in New York City. Construction began in April 1968, and the building was occupied March 2, 1970. The cost for the entire project—design, construction, and furnishings—was $1,218,000. The photographs on this and the next page show the Center in various stages of construction and a few of the people who worked here in the first few decades. The picture at lower right, page 7, of all four HFC managers, was taken during the 40th anniversary festivities for Mather Training Center.

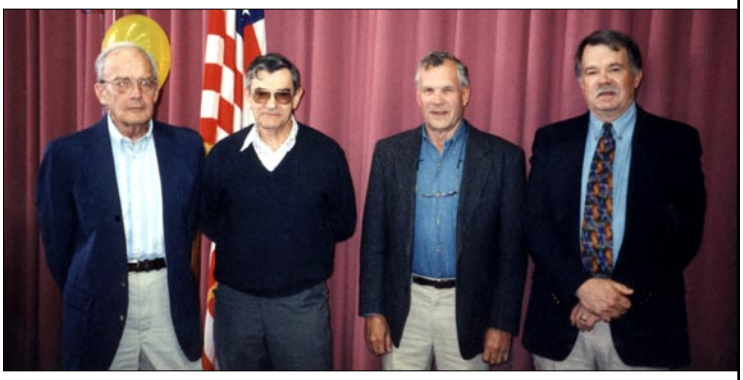








Using the NPS Arrowhead

Guidelines for Identity

For more than 50 years, the Arrowhead has helped to secure worldwide recognition for the Service and its mission. As the centerpiece of NPS identity, it is important that the appropriate version of the Arrowhead always be used, and that its use always complies with established guidelines and policies developed by the Washington Office.

Type 1 - Multiple Color

This Arrowhead is intended for use in printed or other media that can render fine detail. It must be reproduced in a large enough format that all of the details will be visible, such as on a banner.

Type 1 - Single Color

This Arrowhead is intended for the same use as its Multiple Color variation, but is rendered in grayscale to reduce the cost of printing. It must also be reproduced in a large enough format that all of the details will be visible.

Type 2 - Multiple Color

This Arrowhead is intended for use in printed or other media that cannot render fine detail. The flat colors make it perfect for reproduction at any size, from 3/4-inch to sign applications.

Type 2 - Single Color

This Arrowhead is intended for use in printed or other media that cannot render fine detail. This version is nearly as versatile as the Multiple Color variation, but cannot be used on signs.

Type 3 - Single Color

This Arrowhead is intended for use in printed or other media that, like the Type 2 versions, cannot render fine detail. These Arrowheads are excellent for any applications that will be printed from a low-resolution desktop printer, such as Word or Excel documents. The black version is also ideal for items that will be faxed or photocopied, while the brown or green versions can add an accent to a two-color print job.

Type 3 - Single Color Reversed (White)

This Arrowhead is intended for use in printed or other media that, like the Type 2 versions, cannot render fine detail. Because it is drawn using only white, it must be used on a black background. In the case of UniGuide Roadway signs, the Arrowhead is to be used with the standard retroreflective brown background.

Basic Arrowhead Tips

There are established guidelines in place to dictate how the NPS Arrowhead is to be used, but these tips should answer many common concerns about usage. If you have further questions, please contact the Office of NPS Identity at 304-535-4069.

- Do not reproduce any version of the Arrowhead smaller than 3/4". As a general rule, Arrowheads should never be smaller than they are shown on this page.
- Do not use Type 1 Arrowheads for Internet, electronic presentations, or similar media applications; they have too much detail to reproduce well at small sizes.
- Do not use Type 1 or Type 2 Single Color Arrowheads for sign applications.
- Do not enlarge the image beyond the recommended size; this may result in a blurry or pixelated Arrowhead.
- Do not manipulate colors in the Arrowhead; it is designed for use with prescribed Pantone™ Color Matching System colors.
- If you do not have access to a Postscript printer, you must use the Non-Postcript art to avoid a blurry or pixelated Arrowhead.
- For signs and other large-scale applications, a vector version of the Arrowhead art should be used. This art is available from the Office of NPS Identity.